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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 001385

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [KTIA](#) [KLISO](#) [CWC](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: GOI SLOWLY MAKING PROGRESS IN WMD NONPROLIFERATION
AWARENESS

REF: THE HAGUE 286

BAGHDAD 00001385 001.5 OF 003

Classified By: Political Military Minister Counselor Michael H.
Corbin for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: The Government of Iraq (GOI) is slowly making progress in building support among its various ministries for the complex tasks the GOI faces in order to fulfill its international obligations in the field of WMD nonproliferation. The Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate (INMD) and the Crisis Action Cell (CAC) over the past two months have hosted a series of workshops to begin coordinating the roles and responsibilities of various ministries related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) activities, both regarding their obligations under normal circumstances and in the event of a WMD-related crisis. Participants agreed on the need to conduct government-wide strategic planning, develop regulatory structures and coordinate their programs in order to remove Chapter VII UN Security Council restrictions, develop advanced civilian industries, and prevent sensitive materials from falling into the wrong hands. The Minister of Science and Technology has formally requested U.S. assistance for training with regard to GOI obligations related to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), to which the Department is responding by planning future training opportunities for Iraq. Post will continue to engage with these various GOI entities, seeking to encourage and build on the emerging avenues of cooperation that can help achieve Iraq's remaining WMD nonproliferation obligations. End Summary.

Building Support for WMD Nonproliferation

12. (C) Representatives from Iraq's national authority for nonproliferation treaties and key national security officials are slowly making progress in building support for WMD nonproliferation among its many ministries and authorities that have programs and responsibilities related to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) activities. These officials collectively recognize the necessity of developing complex national policies, regulations and coordination systems in order to fulfill Iraq's international obligations in the field of WMD nonproliferation.

13. (C) The INMD, the GOI's national authority responsible for the implementation of WMD nonproliferation treaties and conventions, has championed this issue for the past several years but found it difficult to obtain support and cooperation from disparate ministries consumed by other

priorities. The INMD's efforts appear to be slowly gaining ground, however, achieving Iraq's accession to the CWC in January through engagement with the Council of Representatives (COR) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in subsequent months fulfilling initial CWC declaration requirements.

¶4. (C) A senior official responsible for the CAC under the Iraqi National Security Council Secretariat has also taken an interest facilitating government-wide WMD nonproliferation efforts and over the past month has sponsored a series of workshops and exercises aimed at building awareness among government ministries for the work the GOI needs to accomplish in this area.

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Government-Wide Workshops Focus on Complexity of Tasks

¶5. (C) On April 22, the CAC hosted Iraq's first WMD emergency response tabletop exercise at the Prime Minister's National Operations Center. Representatives from the Iraqi Ministries of Defense, Interior, Science and Technology, Health, Energy, Environment, Industry, Trade, and others discussed their roles and potential responses to a notional chemical spill in Baghdad and a radiological explosion in Karbala. The exercise followed up on an initial gathering in late March where these ministries provided briefs on their clearly-limited existing capabilities to respond to a WMD-related incident. Both events were prepared and conducted with substantial assistance from MNF-I and Embassy officials.

¶6. (C) Despite some confusion over how to run through the
BAGHDAD 00001385 002.6 OF 003

exercise itself, what GOI authority would exercise overall command and control, and how much time for deliberation a real crisis would afford, the participants found the exercise useful and generally agreed on key lessons learned. Multiple ministry officials stressed the need for strategic planning, crisis management procedures and coordination mechanisms ahead of a crisis in order to mitigate the confusion and manage the complexity of response that a hazardous incident requires. The officials expressed support for continued meetings to begin such planning efforts.

¶7. (C) On April 29, the CAC and INMD hosted an informational workshop on Iraq's obligations under nonproliferation treaties, conventions and laws. Mohammed Jawad Al-Sharaa, INMD Director General, briefed senior representatives from the same set of ministries on Iraq's laws and the international agreements, to which Iraq is party, related to WMD nonproliferation. The heads of the chemical, biological and nuclear sections of the INMD then briefed on each of their fields, including specific commitments, obligations and benefits of participation in the CWC, Biological Weapons Convention, and Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, respectively. Iraq is now party to all three. Participants appeared engaged, taking notes and asking questions reflecting understanding of the importance and complexity of the tasks they face.

¶8. (C) Customs, Trade and Electricity representatives inquired about their specific responsibilities, expressing concern about how complex and resource-intensive they might prove. Al-Sharaa explained that the key objective is thorough documentation and monitoring of various technologies and materials in Iraq to ensure they do not end up in the wrong hands, rather than expecting the ministries to store and move materials themselves, or to block their movement and use in Iraq. The officials all stressed that Iraq needs to be able to import, export and utilize modern technology and industrial materials in order to develop a range of industries, for economic development as well as for societal

needs like medical services. They also acknowledged the relevance of remaining security threats in Iraq and the need to prevent terrorists from gaining access to sensitive materials.

Draft Nonproliferation Legislation

¶9. (C) During his April 29 briefing, Al-Sharaa mentioned the comprehensive draft legislation on nonproliferation that the INMD has prepared for approval by the COR. This draft legislation defines the responsibilities of key ministries involved in nonproliferation and is accompanied by detailed instructions for the implementation of Iraq's nonproliferation obligations. It also grants the INMD the status of an independent national authority, rather than a directorate of the Ministry of Science and Technology, which would empower it to exercise coordination and oversight of other ministries' nonproliferation-related activities. Al-Sharaa reiterated on April 29 what he has told EmbOffs in the past, that he expects it to take up to a year to get the legislation through the COR. He briefed the legislation at a meeting of the Deputy National Security Council in February. ¶meeting of the Deputy National Security Council in February and has expressed the hope that the recent inter-ministerial workshops will also help build awareness and support for the legislation. Al-Sharaa told us May 14 that the draft legislation had been rejected by the Council of Ministers because the Minister of Justice believed the INMD was "putting too many restrictions on the GOI." Continued engagement with concerned ministries will emphasize the need for WMD nonproliferation legislation in line with the GOI's international obligations and to assist the GOI to come out from under UN Chapter VII resolutions.

¶10. (C) In response to a request from the U.S. delegation to the 56th Session of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the Hague (Reftel), Minister of Science and Technology Raid Fahmi forwarded an official request for USG assistance to Ambassador Hill in "carrying out our future obligations related to the CWC" on April 29. The Department has received the request and is in the process of planning future training assistance to Iraq in this field, in coordination with the Department of Defense.

BAGHDAD 00001385 003.4 OF 003

Comment

¶11. (C) As the GOI seeks to normalize its role in the international community, it is increasingly paying attention to the requirements and restrictions imposed by the international community on its activities, including in the field of nonproliferation. The desire to end Chapter VII restrictions stems not only from the central leadership seeking sovereignty and international legitimacy, but is a desire shared increasingly by the government's technocrats for practical reasons as they seek to develop Iraqi industries and services in advanced and sensitive areas.

¶12. (C) Fulfilling Iraq's nonproliferation obligations will require complex government-wide efforts, including the establishment of regulatory structures, import/export controls, and safeguards for a variety of technologies, materials and activities used in multiple sectors. The expansion of parties within Iraq who recognize the relevance of WMD nonproliferation to their activities and are willing to coordinate their efforts for practical benefits increases the chances of fulfilling these requirements. The greater the number of parties within the GOI that understand the importance of WMD nonproliferation and that are willing to coordinate their efforts increases the chances of fulfilling

these requirements. GOI technocrats, as opposed to political leaders, are probably best suited to take the practical steps needed to fulfill Iraqi's nonproliferation obligations and achieve the termination of Chapter VII resolutions that the political leaders demand. Post will continue to engage with these various GOI entities, seeking to encourage and build on the emerging avenues of cooperation that can help achieve Iraq's remaining WMD nonproliferation obligations.

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